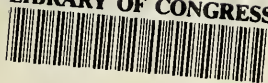


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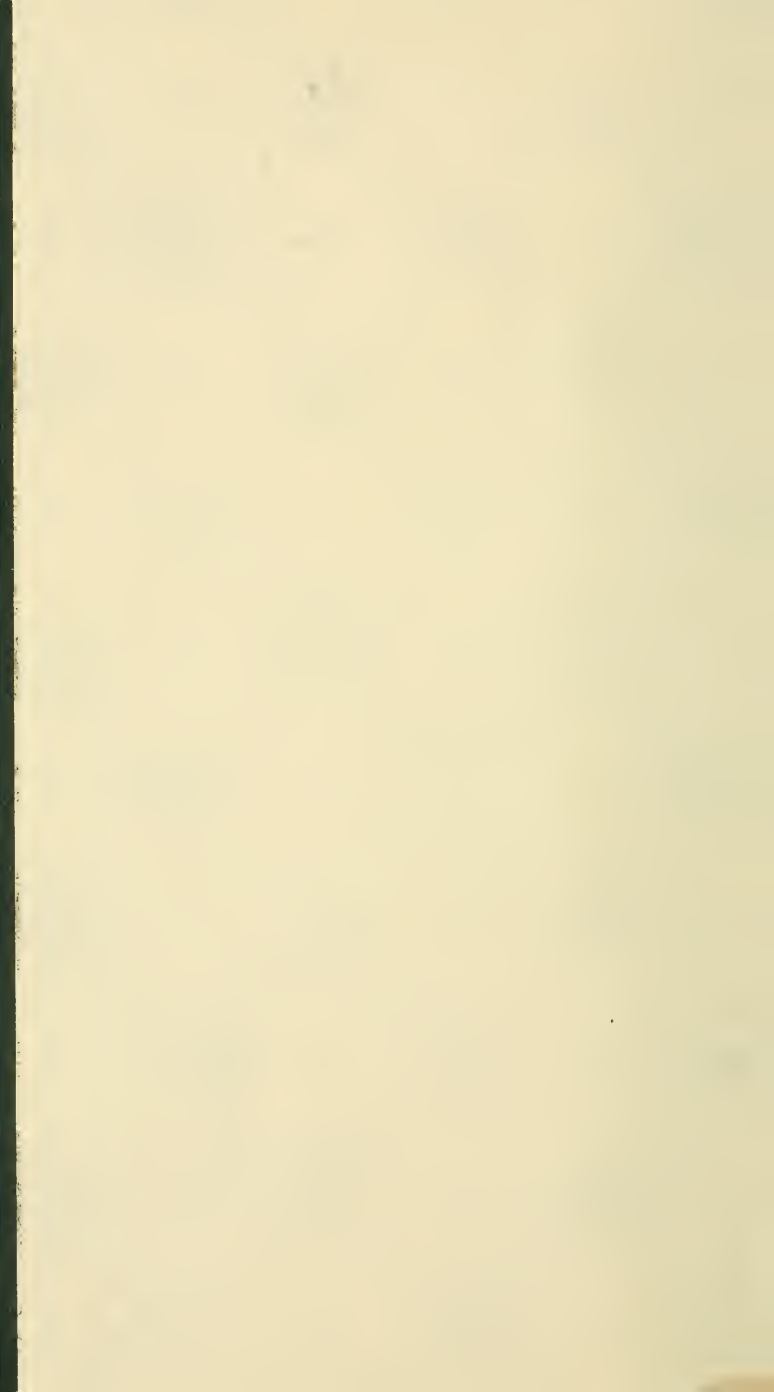
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COLOMBO,

A Drama in Four Acts,

BY A. E. ROSS,

Descriptive of the Struggles and Triumphs

OF THE

DISCOVERER OF AMERICA.

PRICE 25 CENTS.



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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

King Ferdinand
Colombo
Duke of Sidonia
Don Garcia—Friend of Sidonia
Don Manuel—Rival of Garcia
Bobadilla—Enemy of Colombo
Santangel—Treasurer of Arragon
Talavera—Queen's Confessor
Fr. Martinez—Enemy of Colombo
Fr. Perez de Marchena—Friend to Colombo
Fr. Deza—Prior of Salamanca
Beppo—Servant to Colombo
Guevara—Servant to Bobadilla
Gutierrez—Passenger to Cipango
Sailors, Courtiers, etc.

PS2734
R78C6

Queen Isabella
Donna Margarita de Celi—Maid of Honor.

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COLOMBO.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A STREET IN CORDOVA.

Enter DUKE OF SIDONIA, FR. MARTINEZ, R.
GARCIA L.

Sidon.—Garcia, welcome home. 'Tis to be hoped
That fair Seville has showered her best upon
Your head, to compensate Cordova for
Her loss at your departure.

Garc.—Your grace's present smile denotes that I
Have been the loser. Good Sevillian wine
May cheer the ennuyed soul, and fair
Sevillian maids may make us wish we had
A thousand hearts; but old Cordova is
The centre of this earth and gay Sidonia is
The sun which gives Cordova light.

Fr. Mart.—Your grace, from morn to eve you, doubt-
less, hear
The song of parasites as chanted by
Our noble dons; but none can strike the lyre
With such consummate skill
As Don Garcia. He could even coin
A compliment for mad Colombo.

Garc.—Colombo! Who is he?

Sidon.—The crazy Genoese who claims
The earth is round. He talks so glib upon
His favorite theme that even wise men
Listen and believe.

Fr. Mart.—Which means that wisdom, as enshrined
In gay Sidonia, worshipped at the feet
Of mad Colombo.

Sidon.—A Solomon would listen while he talks
And, listening, would forget his wisdom.
My cousin of Celi, as wise a man

As lives in all Castile, became his dupe,
And fed the rogue for two full years.
No wonder, then, that giddy young
Sidonia, too, forgot the little wisdom that
The priests have left him.

Garc.—The Genoese! Is this the dreaming sage
On whom King John of Portugal once tried
To steal a march?

Sidon.—The same. And yet a scurvy trick it was
For royalty to play. If I forgot
My wisdom, John forgot his rank, and I
Would rather bear the name of noble fool,
Than be a fool and royal knave, to boot.

Garc.—Your grace may think it strange to hear
Garcia say that, though Colombo is
To me unknown, I give him credit for
A knowlege greater far than that of those
Who jeer and titter as he passes by.

Fr. Mart.—Is Saul among the prophets? Gay
Garcia taken captive by the strolling
Mountebank! Will wonders ever cease?
Your grace resigned the cap and bells to deck
This new Colombo's fool.

Garc.—The wit of priests is often like their prayers,
So pointless that the hearers heed it not;
Or, if 'tis heard it is o'erlooked, because,
Like men of old, "they know not what they do."

Sidon.—A truce to this, good friends. Sharp wit,
Like yours, is like the tiger's claw,—it hurts,
Not only when it strikes, but leaves
A rankling wound behind. How come you, good
Garcia, thus to speak of one who follows
What the learned call delusions,—
Vain hallucinations which, if followed,
Lead to madness?

Garc.—I am not learned, like his reverence here,
And cannot always give such reasons for
My thoughts as sages skilled in science do.
But I have read and heard of wondrous things
Seen far from any land upon the great
Atlantic,—wood unlike the kinds which grow
In any country known to man, great canes
Which held four quarts of wine from joint to joint;

And on the island Flores men were washed
Ashore, broad-faced and copper-colored, different
In race from any seen before or since.
Beyond the Azores St. Brandam lies,—
Mysterious island of the trackless sea,
And other signs denote that lands unknown,
Great continents, mayhaps, are waiting,
To enrich the man who dares to penetrate
The vast unseen.

Fr. Mart.—For legends wild, like these, the wise
Garcia pins his faith on mad Colombo.

Garc.—For legends wilder far than these
Wise priests have pinned their faith
On ankles neat and faces fair.

Sidon.—Garcia has your reverence there.
Your fair Huelva's feet are running
In his mind. But, good Garcia, think you this
Enough to pit against experience
In the past and all the gathered knowledge of
This learned age?

Garc.—Our royal mistress sent me once
To Denmark on important business. There
I heard strange tales of great adventures on
The western seas. I met an aged sailor there,
Whose father once had sailed from Iceland, south
And west until he came to land,—
A continent, he said, both rich and fair.
And there he met some natives, copper-colored men,
Of splendid bearing. Grapes and fruits,
Of many new delicious kinds, grew wild.
He shewed me trinkets and a copper
Hatchet, brought from that far distant land.
In truth, I heard and saw so much that, faith,
I now believe the so-called mad Colombo
Is the sanest man in all Castile.

Fr. Mart.—There goes he now and with him is
The ancient cobbler fool, who loves the ground
He treads upon,—a fit companion for
The sanest madman seen in all Castile.

Sidon.—His father's servant, so he says.
But have you heard the news, my good Garcia?
War is now declared and swords like brave
Garcia's soon will find a sheath

In Moorish hearts before Granada's walls.

Garc.—Good news, by our St Ferdinand.
I leave your grace, to see the king and offer him
My service 'gainst the Moorish dogs.

[*Exeunt Garcia R.—Sidonia and Fr. Martinez L.*]

SCENE II—ROOM IN ROYAL PALACE.

QUEEN ISABELLA AND DONNA MARGARITA CELI DIS-
COVERED.

Queen.—Art glad that Don Garcia has returned
From fair Seville? Thou need'st not blush
Our Margarita fair. We more than once
Have seen his glances fixed on thee,
When royal eyes were turned away to give
Him favor. By our halidom, a maiden may
Be proud of such a knight as he.
Art glad *petite*?

Marg. (pouting)—I heard Don Mannel assert
That half the maidens of Seville were courted by
The don, and that the other half
Were angry with the favored ones.

Queen.—It needs no sage to know Don Manuel
Was sure that you could hear. He likes not Don
Garcia, nor would let this rumor lose
Its pith, by him rehearsed, when you were near.
He comes this morning for an audience.

Marg.—And will your highness need
My presence while he's here?

Queen.—*Ma chere*, you need not run like
Frightened deer from such a hunter.
Father Martinez and Senor Bobadilla come
With him along. And here they are.

[*Enter FR. MARTINEZ, MANUEL AND BOBADILLA L.*]

Queen.—We welcome you, sir priest, and you,
Our noble friends. We hope our royal greeting
Finds you new in health. What would you, gentlemen?

Man.—We thank your majesty, and trust
That we may go away with hearts as light
As when we came, and that our mission here
May meet with royal favor.

Queen—We see no reason why your hopes
Should not be gratified. Such faithful subjects
Would not ask their queen for aught, unless
It tended to the public weal. Speak out
At once, for business presses on our time.

Man.—We hope to merit all your highness says.
It is because the public weal is threatened
That we come. This Genoese, Colombo, causes
Fretful ferment in the public mind.
The people view his presence with displeasure,
Fearing, should his prayer be granted,
All the heavy burdens which will fall
Upon the state.

Queen (*frowning*).—We had not meant the tax
To fall upon the public purse were our
Approval granted to Colombo's plans.
What has the learned prior heard
Regarding this?

Fr. Mart.—Your gracious majesty, a humble
Servant of the church pays little heed
To any of these earthly squabbles.
Higher duties claim our notice first.
And yet, your majesty, the words Don Manuel
Has spoken can be heard on every corner.
Men are restless, shake their heads
And mutter discontentment when they meet.
The war has added to the imposts laid,
Upon their lands and, though they grudge
Not this, because they look upon it as
A holy war to free the country from
The curse of Moslem dogs, they fear
Such added tax as may be laid
To gratify this crazy Genoese.
But this is not the worst. There is a deeper and
More dreadful fear upon the people's minds.

Queen—Go on, sir prior. Why this pause?
Castile is dear to Isabella's heart,
And never yet has Isabella slighted
What concerns her subjects' weal. Speak, sir,
At once and say what further ills they dream.

Fr. Mart.—I paused, your majesty, because I feel
That what they dread is but a groundless fear.
But by your royal order I must speak.

They tell in whispers dreadful stories
Of Atlantic horrors,—tales which sailors
Have recited in their ears, of ships
Which sailed far out into the west,
And never more were seen. And this
Lies heavier on their hearts than any fear
Of money tax. The latter they would
Freely give to their beloved queen; but, if
Colombo's suit should win, they ask with fear
Who are to be the doomed companions of
His voyage wild. 'Tis this, your majesty,
Which stirs their fears; 'twas this which made
Me pause before you ordered me to speak.

Queen—And Senor Bobadilla, what has he
To say regarding good Colombo?

Bob.—Your majesty, a blunt man speaks
As blunt men think. I like not this Colombo, nor
His quest. He's but a foreigner, at best,
A mere adventurer, who roves from court
To court, in search of noble fools and
Royal dupes. King John of Portugal
Unmasked the scheming rogue, and now he haunts
Castile, as easy gudgeon for his glittering bait.

Queen—Don Bobadilla speaks, he says,
As blunt men do, and this blunt privilege
Is granted, too, to queens. The trick
Of royal John may scarce be quoted as
A model for Castile. Our royal name
Shall ne'er be smirched with stain of cheat;
Nor does the name of *royal dupes* become
The lips of subjects, when their queen can hear.—
The junta soon will meet and Prior Martinez
Will there have more authority than here.
Don Manuel, so careful of the public purse
That even Isabella is reproached,
Can rest at ease. The junta will determine
This momentous question. Other cares
Need our attention now. We would not keep
The prior from his beads.

[*Exeunt* FR. MARTINEZ. MANUEL AND BOBADILLA L.]

Queen (*To Marg.*)—They plot the ruin of Colombo.
Even royal power must bow when money speaks.
My child, this Manuel has baleful eyes.

He'll bear our watching. (*Patting Marg. on head*)
We love our little dove too well to see
Without concern such fowlers fly their cruel hawks.

Marg. (Kneeling and kissing the queen's hand).—
Your gracious majesty takes place
Of mother in my heart. Were she alive
She scarce could love me more. My heart is yours,
And shall be while I live.

[*Isabella kisses Margarita on forehead and both
exunt R.*]

SCENE III.— STREET IN MALAGA AFTER ITS CAPTURE.

*Enter FR. PEREZ AND SIDONIA R., IN EARNEST CON-
VERSATION.*

Sidon.—It seems a marvel how he disappeared.
Alas! Garcia slain by traitorous blow
Of Spanish steel. The dying Pablo told
Me all, and yet I scarcely can believe.
A Spanish noble hiring cutthroats!
Good Perez, I cannot credit this.

[*Enter BEPPO L. HIDES AND LISTENS.*]

Fr. Per.—The dying seldom leave the clay
With lying words upon their lips.
The soldier Pablo said that he was paid
To strike the blow which killed Garcia.

Sidon.—'Twas this he told to me. He would
Not speak the name of him who thus becomes
The real assassin. But to you he spoke
Without reserve. The old Castilian blood
Would spurn a deed like this. What trait'rous
Coward so disgraced the honored name of Spain?

Fr. Per.—Confession's seal is sacred. Priests
Dare never speak when that is laid upon their lips.

Sidon. (starting).—I have it. Yes, I guess the truth.
A taint is in the blood. For this much Heaven
Be thanked—no pure Castilian thus
Dishonored old Castile. Don Manuel
Has hated poor Garcia since my cousin
Margarita came to court. They both
Have loved her, but she favored Don Garcia,
And the false Bohemian blood

His mother gave him sought revenge.
I see your reverence knows that I am right.

Fr. Per.—The innocent have died, because
Conclusions drawn from circumstances seemed
To prove them guilty.

Sidon.—The guilty, too, have lived, because
Conclusions drawn from circumstances hanged
The innocent. On this we both agree—
Garcia fell before the walls
From mortal wounds, and next his body
Vanishes from earth. What can it mean?

Fr. Per.—I loved the youth and grieve as much
As you that he was foully slain. My tongue
Is tied, and I can say no more.

Beppo (aside).—I love a priest as much as priests
Do love Colombo, Venerable vermin!
Living catacombs! I smell a secret
When I see a friar's gown.

Sidon.—I loved him well and I had cause,
For once he saved me from a Moorish cimeter.
I know his father, too,—a grand old man,
A true Castilian nobleman, and—yes,
My good Perez, I shall confide in you:—
I love Garcia's sister, whom he idolized,
And for her sake I wish to give him
Christian burial.

Fr. Per.—My prayers are with you that you may
Succeed. But I must leave your grace. A sick
Old man awaits my coming. Fare thee well.

Sidon.—And I must to the field and search
Again. Farewell, good father. (*Exit PEREZ R. SIDONIA*
SEES BEPPO ADVANCING.) Ho, there, old man.
I've seen that face before. Ha! 'tis
The servant of Colombo.

Bep. (Bowling).—Old Beppo, at your grace's service.

Sidon.—Good Beppo, how does good Colombo fare?

Bep.—On Fridays he eats fish; on other days
He dines on bacon, with a taste of garlic.

Sidon.—I mean not that. But do his wishes prosper?

Bep.—His wishes! He is full of wishes as
An egg is full of meat; but, like a cat
That wishes cream, he seldom has his wish.

Sidon.—Perverse! But is your master in good health?

Bep.—I am not wise enough to know
How he could have *bad* health.

Sidon.—What quibble now? Explain your paradox.

Bep.—The paradox consists in being in
Bad health. I never knew that health was bad.

Sidon.—You're wiser, Beppo, than you seem.
But are you cobbling still?

Bep.—When cobblers cobble can they cobble still?

Sidon.—Wise fool! What is your meaning now?

Bep.—A cobbler moves when he is cobbling.
If he is still he cannot cobble.

Sidon.—A play on words, good Beppo. I will try
You with a question that you cannot twist.
Whose shoe is that you carry home?

Bep.—A dead man's shoe.

Sidon.—A dead man's shoe! Why have
You soled it then?

Bep.—Were I a quibbler, as you say, I'd tell
You that I soled it for the dead man's *sole*.

Sidon.—Sacristo, Beppo, this is blasphemy
You speak The man is dead, you say.

Bep.—I cannot say. I heard you tell
The priest the man was dead. (*Looking meaningly*)

Sidon.—You heard me tell the priest
The man was dead. What man was meant?

Bep.—His name is Don Garcia.

Sidon.—What? Don Garcia! Then, is this
Garcia's shoe?

Bep.—He says it is.

Sidon.—My friend is living then?

Bep.—He was an hour or two ago.

Sidon.—Good Beppo, cease all quibbles now,
And tell me where Garcia is.

Bep.—Asleep at Senor Colombo's house.

Sidon.—I pray you lead me to his side.

Bep. (*Seriously*)—Your grace must pardon me if I
Refuse. You cannot see him now.
My master found him on the battlefield,
And brought him to his house. The don

Was wounded in the side, and nearly bled
To death. My master dressed the wound,—
He studied leechcraft while at school.
And now brave Don García does as well
As you could wish. But master says he must
Have quiet, and that is final. If you meet
Me here again I'll bring you tidings
Of his state.

Sidon.—I thank thee, Beppo. Meet me here
Tomorrow at this hour. Take this,
And do not fail to come.

(*Gives Beppo a pistole and exit L. Beppo exit R*)

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN COLOMBO'S HOUSE.

Col. (Discovered)—They call me dreamer—me, on whom
The fates are heaping thoughts of highest moment.
They are the dreamers—they, the common herd,
Who eat and sleep and care for naught beside.
The nobles dream of revels,—kings of pomp,—
The priest of feasts,—the slave of freedom;
And his a worthier dream than comes
To all the gay, unthinking crowd.
And I—I dream of what the sun, the moon
And all the glittering stars by day and night
To me proclaim. I dream of this great world,
Round which I travel in my sleepless thoughts.
For this they call me dreamer, or in pitying
Strain proclaim me madman. Yet like the slave,
I would be free—free from the thrall of old
Traditions,—free from the bonds of blinding
Ignorance.—The sons of Jacob called
Their brother Joseph *dreamer*; yet he ruled
The mighty land of Egypt, God's selected
Instrument to save the chosen race.—
Perhaps, the men of Tyre were dreamers
When they passed the gates of Hercules,
And sailing north enriched themselves and their
Phœnician king with tin from English mines.
This waiting wearies out my life.
I shall to France or England if the junta
Casts this hope into the grave.

(*Enter BEPPO L. WEEPING*)

Col.—What grieves thee, Beppo?

Bep.—I weep, because I saw thee smile.

Col.—Good Beppo, must I always wear
A gloomy mien, to cheer thy heart?

Bep.—When storms are near dame Nature
Smiles the sweetest. Coming evil follows close
Behind Colombo's smile. I try to make
The evil less by shedding tears,
To serve as antidotes.

Col.—My faithful Beppo, when did tears
Appease the wrath of fate, or strengthen faith
When men were false?

Bep.—In Portugal, when John gave royal pledge
That he would furnish what you asked.

Col.—How, Beppo, how?

Bep.—I wept and sighed, and sighed and wept
Again, and, when the royal cheat sent out
His caravel by stealth, I smiled with right good will.

Col.—Well, Beppo, what was gained?

Bep.—My master, when the scurvy trick was told,
Made haste from Portugal and I—forgot
To pay the debts I owed. Revenge is sweet.
But here have I been gabbling, and forgot
The message which I bear. The wounded senor
Asks that he may wait on thee.

Col.—Good Beppo, go at once and bring
Him hither. (*Exit BEPPO L.*) Truth is drawn at times
From unexpected springs. Poor Beppo loves
Me well, and love has sharpened ignorance
To point so keen that intuition is
Its offspring.

Enter (GARCIA L. LEANING ON BEPPO'S ARM)

Col.—This is kind, indeed.
Is Don Garcia wise in risking thus
The wound which yet is far from healed?

Garc.—Most gracious senor, when the heart
Is full of gratitude and hope,
It gravitates around that other heart,
Which gave it life for death.

Col.—It is not always thus. A noble soul
Feels kindness deepest; 'tis the coward and
The caitiff who are ingrates. But this prating
Indicates a sense of benefits conferred,

Whereas the guerdon of congenial fellowship
Makes me a debtor to your wound.

Garc.—And, thus, the soul that loves its kind
Makes light of all the good it does, and counts
As privilege what lower natures reckon
Sacrifice. When I lay bleeding in
That hidden trench I thought of home, of friends,
Of youthful follies and of her who is
My star of hope. The gaping wound
Was draining off the crimson stream,
And I could hear the clanking stride of death
Approaching fast. At last—oblivion, then
A gracious presence near me, soothing as
A strain of gentle music. I had passed
The gates of Hades and, Orpheus—like,
Colombo came and drew me back to earth.
The life you gave is henceforth yours.

Col.—Enough of this, dear friend.
The past is mine; the future may be yours.
Next week will tell what fate designs
Between Colombo and Castile.

Garc.—I would not lightly dare intrude
Upon your private business, but Garcia longs
To know if he can serve Colombo then.

Col.—Not then my friend. On Tuesday next
The junta will assemble. Then the hopes
And fears of years will be decided.
The cardinal has spoken kindly, though
At first he thought my plans heretical.
And Talavera, too, encourages my hopes.
The place of meeting will be Salamanca,
For which I journey forth at dawn tomorrow,
And glad I am that I can leave you now
So far recovered that there need be no alarm.

Garc.—Your patient courtesy has hitherto
Prevented me from saying what I would.
My absence in Seville and, afterwards,
The outbreak of the present war kept you
And me apart, until you rescued me
From death. But now we know that each
Is to the other—friend. I owe you much,
And, knowing what I do, I bid you keep
Close watch on Martinez. For reasons, now
To me unknown, the wily priest

Is hostile to your suit, and tries on all
Occasions how he may belittle you,
And thwart your plans.

Col.—'Tis nothing new for me to meet
Injustice such as you describe. Since first
I entered on this quest sour prejudice
And biting jealousy have joined their hands
To cross my aims. For eight long years I have
Endured the raillery of priests, the scoffs
Of pedants, treachery and foul deceit
From men of high estate. The road
To ordinary knowlege offers few
Obstructions, and the traveller sins against
The vanity of none. But, when he leaves
The beaten track, ascends the heights and brings
New treasures from the mountain tops,
The pedants stand aghast, routinists say
Experience only can be trusted and the pack
Of false impostors, owl-faced drones
And gowned simpletons stand baying
At the moon, as if that lifeless orb
Had given birth to lunacy.
But, Don Garcia, only patience can
Attain the glorious end to which my life
Is given. Yet mark my words,—the day
Is coming, yea, is now at hand,
When bigotry, false pride and ignorance
Will bow before the truth which God is now
Evolving. Truth must be triumphant;—
So will I, the Genoese Colombo.

Garc.—I glory in your high resolve,
And yet will see the triumph which must come.
But now I waste your time and, if the truth
Be told, my strength is not the equal of my wish.

Col.—I pray forgiveness, for my zeal
Outran my prudence. Beppo, Beppo, come.
These mighty projects and their great
Results made me forget your wound.

(*Enter BEPPO L.*)

Assist the senor to his chamber, Beppo;
And, in my absence, see to all his needs.
I go at early dawn.

Bep.—I shall be ready, senor.

Col.—Nay, Beppo; you remain at present here,

To nurse the Don Garcia.

*Bep. (Aghast).—*Remain! Good master are you mad
At last? A journey and no Beppe!
Senor, senor, who will fetch your linen
And your hose? Alas, alas! The moon
Is at the full.

(*Exit* GARCIA L. LEANING ON-BEPPPO)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—STREET IN SEVILLE.

Enter TALAVERA AND MARTINEZ L.

*Talav.—*The cardinal himself, I find, had seen
The queen and interceded for Colombo.
Why this vagrant should impress a man
Of learning, like the great Mendoza,
Winning from him sympathy and trust,
Is past my skill to fathom. But his grace
Has openly declared himself a convert
To Colombo's views.

*Mart.—*Don Manuel and Bobadilla went
With me to see the queen and press upon
Her notice how the people feel.
This happened at Cordova ere we left.

*Talav.—*And how were you received?

*Mart.—*Received with courtesy, dismissed
With sharp rebuke.

*Talav.—*Rebuke! And how came this about?

*Mart.—*Don Manuel but hinted that
The public purse was threatened, and the queen
Received it as a personal affront.
And Senor Bobadilla acted like a bull
Within a china shop, as usual,
Treading on the royal toes by hinting
That Colombo easily made kings and queens
His dupes, and ending with a compliment
To John of Portugal, for whom her majesty
Has little love. She treated Bobadilla
To a scoring, then gave Manuel a slap
For his remarks, and ended with a hint
That I had better tell my beads.

She rapped us all with caustic force.

Talav.—It is not hard to know the reason
For her majesty's desire to show
Some kindness to Colombo.
Father Perez de Marchena interceded
For his protegee. But I can still
Assist you, for a junta will be called,
And I can so arrange that you will be
Assigned to this important work and, when
The junta meets, you then will have your chance.
Why do you so dislike Colombo?

Mart.—For reasons which I cannot tell you now.
I, too, was born in Genoa and hereditary
Feud exists between his father's house
And mine. In Italy that means revenge.
Is that enough?

Talav.—'Tis best to say no more. Here come
Don Manuel and Senor Bobadilla.

Enter DON MANUEL AND BOBADILLA R.

Man.—Well met, most reverend fathers.
Senor Bobadilla craves a conference
With Father Martinez.

Talav.—Your coming favors my desires.
Her majesty expects me, and the prior
Was detaining me. Vobiscum Deus. (*Exit R*)

Mart.—My time is yours. The senor's face
Imports some pressing care.

Bobad.—My visage never masks my thoughts.
When I rejoice my face reveals the fact.
It shows when I am sad, and trouble stamps
Its impress on my features. And my tongue
Is like my face—it tells my inmost thoughts.

Mart.—'Tis best at times to keep both face
And tongue in check, for not so very long ago
The queen impressed that lesson on us all.
What rests upon the senor's mind?

Bobad.—This foreign mountebank is like
A weight about my neck. But now "I have
Him on the hip." He fought at Malaga
And gained more credit than good
Soldiers did. It now appears his fighting
Was a mere pretext, to give him fitting chance

To kill a better man. He had a grudge
Against the noble Don Garcia,
And 'tis said that when the fight was hottest,
Traitor that he was, he slew the don.

Mart.—How know you this?

Bobad—A soldier told me that he saw him
Strike the blow, and furthermore he went
At night and carried off the corpse.

Mart.—This should be followed up.
I scarce believe it true; but, if the rumor go
Abroad, it will increase the hatred
Of the people for Colombo, and may
Reach the king. What think you, Manuel?

Man—To me 'tis passing strange that since
The fight at Malaga the don has not been seen.
He was reported dead and yet
The searchers failed to find the body
On the field.

Bobad.—I think the mountebank could tell
Us where Garcia lies, if he were brought to book.

Mart—Let this impression creep abroad
Among the people. 'Tis a leaven that
Will suit our purpose. Time will bring
It to the royal ears, but we should not
Be known at present in the matter.
Queens have memories.

Man—For me, my knowledge is confirmedⁿ
To what I heard from Bobadilla.

Mart.—The leaven will work. Such news
Will travel fast. A single word well placed
Will soon become a volume. (*Exeunt L.*)

SCENE II.—ROOM IN SALAMANCA UNIVERSITY.

TABLE IN CENTER. CHAIRS AND BENCHES.

DIGNITARIES—TO HEAR COLOMBO. TALAVERA PRE-
SIDES.

Talav.—Most grave and learned senors, fathers
In the church, and students of the mysteries
Of space, by royal order are you now
Assembled here, to weigh a question which

Concerns the welfare of the state.
It scarce becomes a tyro, like myself,
To lead in this assembly; but their majesties
Have laid this burden on my head,—
A duty meet for Plato, and I crave
Indulgence for my lack of trained skill.
The eyes of all Castile are on you,—nay,
Of Christendom itself, for on your wisdom
Hinges now a question which contains
Great truth or grievous error.
Most illustrious fathers, hear, I pray you,
What Colombo has to offer for
Your grave consideration.

Col. (Rising.)—Most learned fathers, after many years
Of fruitless labor God has heard my prayers.
At last I come before the wisest in this land
Of learning, confidently trusting that
The truth of what I say will meet your quick
Approval. Men like you need not be told
That many of the most profound
Astronomers of ancient and of modern times
Agree in calling this our earth a great
Terraqueous sphere. From Ptolemy
Of Egypt, down to Toscanelli of today,
The greatest minds deny the earth is flat,
And Alfraganus clearly shows
That eastern Asia extends so far
That Europe is approached at northern points.
Convinced of this, I now believe
That, sailing west, a ship can reach
The island of Cipango, which
Is separated by a narrow sea
From Tartary, vast empire of the mighty Khan.
The day is not far off,
When men will launch upon the deep
And, steering on from east to west, will reach
The port from which they sailed. To gain
This glory for Castile is now my great
Ambition. Your decision will determine
What the king and queen may do,
And thus your names in future ages be
Revered, as rescuing the fairest part
Of earth from darkness to the light of Christ.

Fr. Dez.—A great and blessed work, if it

Can be accomplished. But what proof
Can you adduce that what you say is true?

Col.—The proofs are many and of various kinds.
On learned scholars, like yourselves, I need
Not urge that this great earth is round.

Fr. Mart.—It would be needless, for to say
The earth is round compels us to believe
That on the other side men walk with feet
Above their heads, and roots of trees must be
Above their tops. A man thus placed
Would topple off in space.

Col.—An orange, too, is round, but insects
On the lower side do never topple off.

Fr. Dez.—But, senor, how could sailors face
The heat, which scorches all the torrid belt,
To reach the antipodes?

Col.—The sailors sent by Henry, king
Of Portugal, to search the Afric coast,
Endured this torrid heat without complaint.
But in the voyage which I plan we would
Not cross this torrid belt, because we sail
From east to west.

Talav.—Suppose a ship should start from Spain,
Which lies upon the upper side of earth,
And sail until it reached the lower side.
I clearly see how it could downward go;
But, when the lower side is reached,
I cannot understand how it could climb
The steep ascent and gain its home in Spain.
It never could return.

Col.—With due respect for Father Talavera's
Wisdom, we should not forget that wise
Astronomers have said our earth rotates
Upon its axis once from noon to noon again.
If this be true,—and stamp of truth
Lies on its face,—a ship of Spain at noon
Is on the upper side, at midnight on
The lower side of this rotating globe.

(GREAT COMMOTION AND SMILES OF DERISION.)

Fr. Mart.—I cannot tell how others feel,
But, for myself, I think this sounds
Like infidelity most rank. In Holy Writ

The earth is spoken of as flat, and all
The fathers, from Lactantius on to St.
Augustine, say expressly antipodes
Cannot exist.

Fr. Dez.—I have not found in all the word
Of God a place which says the earth is flat.
While God does not declare it round,
He does not say 'tis not. Will good
Colombo state his reasons why he thinks it round?

Col.—The learned Ptolemy believed it round,
And gave good reasons for his faith.
But other proofs exist. Upon the ocean, when
Two ships approach from any side,
Their mastheads first are seen, and then their hulls.
And, passing on, their hulls are lost to view,
While still the masts are seen, till they,
Too, disappear, as if the ships by slow
Degrees were climbing o'er a ridge, and then
Descending on the other side. This could not be,
Unless the water lay upon a convex sphere.

Fr. Dez.—What reason canst thou give
For thinking that Cipango can be reached
By sailing westward?

Col.—That land is there is no uncertain thing.
Vicenti saw, four hundred leagues from Cape
St. Vincent, drifting from the west, a piece
Of carved wood, a kind not known in Europe.
Pine trees have also drifted from the west
And landed at the Azores. To Flores, driven
By western winds, came copper-colored
Bodies, two in number, and of different race
From any ever seen before. Reeds of
Enormous size, like those which grow
In India, landed on the shore
Of Porto Santo. Travellers, too, upon
The western ocean tell of islands seen
Far in the west. In Denmark men
Are living now, whose fathers westward sailed
Until a continent was reached, both fair
And rich in many kinds of fruits.
A brave young Spanish noble, Don Garcia,
Told me that he saw a copper hatchet there
And trinkets, brought from that
Far-distant land.

Fr. Mart.—Colombo scarce would speak
Such words as these were dead Garcia here
In life to verify or contradict
The statements made.

Col. (Indignant)—My life in Spain is known
To many men of high repute,
And no man living dare in justice say
I lie. Garcia dead! In Malaga
On Tuesday last I left him at my house
Alive, recovering from a dangerous wound.
But were Garcia here, much more than what
I tell would he declare. I came to Salamanca
With the thought that, out of self-respect
And deference to the sovereigns of Castile
And Arragon, the members of this junta would
Devote profound investigation to
A problem of such magnitude as this.
I came not here to listen tamely while
My truth is called in question.

Fr. Dez.—For one I do not wonder at
Colombo's indignation. Father Martinez,
Believing what has been reported here
And elsewhere—Don Gardia's death,—forgot
His courtesy, while sorrowing for his friend.
We all expect that reparation will
Be made at once to Senor Colombo.

Fr. Mart.—The news which Senor Colombo tells
Will justify my awkward speech,
Which meant that Don Garcia would have said
What good Colombo told, had he been here alive.
And now, I ask the senor if he thinks
That men of learning so profound as those
We see assembled here can throw aside
What science and all past experience prove,
And credit tales which children ridicule.

Col.—My hope and strong conviction when
I journeyed hither was that, when
Such weighty questions came before
This learned junta, grave consideration would
Be given to every point. With one or two
Exceptions, all the dignitaries present here
Have shown their bias from the first.
A question which can stir the hearts of kings
Has met no echo in these schoolmen's souls.

I know too well what verdict you will give,
And henceforth I shall think no more of Spain.
What grieves me most in this is, that the gracious queen,
Who rules Castile, will miss an empire by
Your act. Both France and England seek
What you reject, and I shall hie me hence,
To treat with those who see what lies beyond
The great Atlantic's waves. The passing years
Will show what Spain has missed, and as
The centuries roll on the men who this day throw
Away the grandest heritage on earth
Will be forgotten when my name will live.
I leave you to your self-contentment and
The execrations of your countrymen,
When they discover what your lack of faith
And blinded prejudice have done.
With trust in God I ne'er shall yield
Until my glorious mission is fulfilled.
And so, farewell.

Exit R.

SCENE III.—STREET IN MALAGA.

Enter BEPPO L.

Bep.—When he was down upon his back
Our larder was sufficient. But 'tis different now,
When appetite returns. How can I feed
Him? That's the rub. I gave him yesterday
His choice of bacon and fresh garlic, or
Stale garlic and fresh bacon. That was for
His dinner, and he chose the bacon and
Fresh garlic. Then for supper this was changed
Around—stale garlic and fresh bacon.
But, now the bacon's gone, variety is scant.
Would he were a Jew, for then I'd still
Have bacon in the house. But when it comes
To garlic, or—more garlic, all
The other dishes must be—garlic.
He thus may think Colombo poor,
That's where my old awl pricks—the sole
Disturber of my peace. But here he comes
And Don Sidonia, too,—another mouth
To feed—on garlic. (*Exit BEPPO R.*)

Enter GARCIA AND SIDONIA L.

Garc.—How did you hear what you have told?

Sidon.—My cousin of Celi was journeying to Granada from Seville. 'Twas in Seville He heard the story told by Bobadilla who Is hostile to Colombo. Bobadilla said The Genoese was by your side When fighting near the trench and, as You leaped across, he plunged his sword Into your side.

Garc.—I know not how 'twas done; but this I know without a doubt,—Colombo was Not near. Colombo be a traitor! Sooner would I think the cardinal himself Would play the knave. Colombo has a soul Above reproach, a man among a thousand. Tell me, good Sidonia, how to help his need,— Relieve his wants, for poverty so has Him in its grasp that oft he knows not whence Necessities will come. 'Tis sad, and yet 'Tis mirth-provoking, too, to hear Old Beppo groan and fret about The larder, when he thinks I am not near. He loves Colombo more than many wives Do love their lords and fears lest I may see Their pressing wants. Tomorrow you and I Set out for old Cordova. We shall take Old Beppo, too, and feed him till He'll burst his jerkin. Here he comes.

Re-enter BEPPO R.

Sidon.—Ho, Beppo, whither bound?

Bep —My joints are now too stiff to bound.

Sidon.—Still quarreling with words. I mean, Where do you bend your steps?

Bep.—A man may bend his head, his back, His knees; but how to bend a step I never learned.

Sidon.—The gods grant patience! Beppo, Don Garcia through your kindness has At last regained his strength. He leaves Tomorrow for Cordova, and desires That you with him shall go along. Colombo will be there, and will expect you.

Bep.—Colombo at Cordova! Thither will
I *bend my steps* I start this hour.
No journey is too long for me, to reach
Colombo. Two score leagues! That's nothing,
If Colombo's there.

Garc.—Friend Beppo, you shall go with me.
Take this (*Hands money*) and hire a mule. You shall
Not *bend a step*, for I am much
Your debtor. Go at once and make
You ready 'gainst the morning.

Bep. (*Looking at money*)—I bend my body for
Your bounty, Don Garcia. (*Aside*) Garlic. Faugh!
No more today. Pig's feet and liver, with
A taste of honey and, perhaps,
A carrot for a relish. Yes, old Beppo, you
Can be extravagant, for once.
What, twenty pistoles! I could *buy* a mule
For less. (*Aloud*) But, Don Garcia, name
The hour for dinner.

Garc.—I dine with Don Sidonia today.
You need not longer think of me.
Be ready in the morning.

(*Exeunt SIDONIA AND GARCIA R.*)

Bep.—Not think of him, when eating liver
And pig's feet. Yum, yum! I'll think
Of him at every mouthful. (*Exit L.*)

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN ROYAL PALACE.

KING AND SANTANGEL PLAYING CHESS. R. }
MARTINEZ AND TALAVERA CONFERRING. L. } *Discovered.*

Enter QUEEN ISABELLA R.

Queen.—Your majesty, I come
A suppliant for royal favor. Art thou now
In mood to grant a boon?

King.—What boon so great that
Isabella may not ask? And yet, 'twere worth
A kingdom to be left alone when chess
Demands attention.

Queen.—It is a kingdom that I wish
To give to thee,—mayhaps, an empire.
But the queen of fair Castile requests

The king of Arragon to grant
An audience to the sailor, Senor Colombo.

King—Carambo, Isabel, hast lost thy wits?
Carajo, why should sailors break a game
Of chess? Santangel would detest
Colombo, were he balked in conquering
The king, as now he's like to do.

Sant.—I willingly would lose a game of chess,
To gratify Queen Isabella's wish.

King.—In faith, thou art a traitor, Don
Santangel Well, this compact do I make:—
If I shall win this game, the audience will
Be granted But Colombo's chance is small,
For, see, my queen is lost. I cannot save her.

Queen (Looking at board)—A queen may well
Be given for a pawn, (*pointing to a move*) if then
A king is conquered.

King—Now, by our halidom, fair spouse,
Colombo is in fortune. That small pawn
Santangel gives, secures the game, my queen
Her boon and grants Colombo audience.
That is check, Santangel.

Sant.—I yield, my liege. The queen's advice
Is always worth attention and will hold
Regarding good Colombo.

Queen—An omen of success, our royal spouse.
That game stood for an empire, and the pawn
Santangel gave will send Colombo
To the west. Art ready to admit him?

King—From smaller things than this
Results of magnitude have followed.
Bring the sailor in.

(*Exit QUEEN R*)

Talav. (Aside)—That game has won Colombo's suit

Mart. (Aside)—May curses rest upon the pawn
That did it. But there still is left a chance
To block Colombo's game. The king should be
Reminded of the junta's verdict. Wilt thou speak?

Talav.—And trust my head between
The royal jaws? Nay, Martinez, 'twere height
Of folly now to kick against the pricks.
The queen is on her mettle.

(*Re-enter QUEEN with COLOMBO R.*)

Queen—Your majesty, this worthy sailor
Stands before you, after years of waiting,
Now to hear your final answer to his suit.
Both France and England send him urgent word
To visit them, and Henry craves that England
Shall not fall behind when Spain
And Portugal are running races for
New territory far beyond the sea.
Castile and Arragon can balk Him
In his greed. What thinks your majesty?

King—We frankly own it seems to us
A game of chance, a dangerous game, to boot.
We much desire to gratify our royal spouse,
And that weighs heavy in the scale.
But, should we send forth ships to run
The risks of that forbidding sea,
Remorse would eat our lives if they should ne'er
Return. What think ye, reverend fathers?

(TALAVERA AND MARTINEZ APPROACH)

Talav. (*Meeting Queen's eye*)—"Twere best to hear
What good Colombo has to say.

King—Colombo hath already plead
His cause, both in our presence and before
The junta. But, if he hath still further
Reasons good to add, we would be just
And hear him. Senor Colombo, speak;
Or hence forever hold thy peace.

Col.—Your gracious Majesty of Arragon,
And thou, most Christian lady, Sovereign of
Castile, the weal of countless nations rests
Upon your wisdom. (*As if prophetically*)
I see before me, spread as by the hand of God,
A wondrous land,—fair islands in the sea,
And continents extending farther than
Swift thought can reach. I see rich fertile fields
And mighty rivers rolling through
Great valleys rich beyond compare.
Still farther on I see a splendid city,
Filled with busy thousands. Behold
Its temples, towers and palaces, with roofs
Of gold, and jewels sparkling in the sun.
I see the people pouring forth, to worship,—
Not the God whom we adore, but images
Of stone, and brass, and gold. I see the priests

Before the altars, offering sacrifice
To hideous, lifeless statues. Horrible,
Most horrible to tell, the victims
Offered to the idols bear the likeness
Of the Lord of Hosts. The gleaming knife
Descends and slays old men, young maids,
And helpless babes, until the stones are laved
With blood.—King Ferdinand, to thee,
And to thy gracious spouse these innocents
Are calling, and the Lord presents a work
So grand that millions now unborn
Will bless your names. To Christianize
That heathen land will bring to Spain
And you a greater glory than was gained
By conquering Granada.

Queen (Enthusiastically)—My sovereign spouse,
How can you hesitate when such
A glorious work is offered.

King—This is a work on which the church
Should speak. Will Father Martinez express
What seems to him our duty?

Fr. Mart.—At Salamanca, sire, the junta met,—
The learned fathers of the church.
Save one or two, they all pronounced this quest
A wild chimera, dangerous to
The public peace, the offspring of
A weakened brain, unfit for your
Consideration. I agreed with what
My colleagues said.

Queen (In anger)—Sir priest, 'twere well
That you should know your place. We learned
From several quarters how your malice showed
Itself at Salamanca, where the learned
Prior Deza well rebuked your insolence.
Remember this,—Castile may whisper to
His Holiness at Rome that Martinez
Requires a change of climate.
We do not need you further here today.

(*Exit MARTINEZ R.*)

King (Smiling)—We see that Isabella has
Made up her mind, and Ferdinand
Would not oppose her wish. 'Twere well,

However, to consider that the state
Is now impoverished by war.

Queen—We ask no money from the treasury.
The queen of old Castile can find the means
To fit the expedition forth, if we
Should pawn our jewels for this purpose.
Will Arragon now join us in the work?

King—Our royal spouse shall have our full
Consent. It now remains to see if we
Can fittingly arrange the terms.
Senor Colombo, have you reconsidered
Your determination?

Col.—Your majesty, I cannot change
My terms. I care not for myself,
But I have registered a sacred vow
That from the profits I may gain
I shall equip an army to redeem
The sepulchre of Christ in Palestine,
And wrest it from the grasp of Islam.

King—So be it then. The papers shall be signed.
We now may give Santangel chance
For his revenge at chess.

Sant. (Kneeling to Queen)—Santangel never lost
A game with lighter heart than now.

Queen (Smiling)—And queen was never given
For pawn with such results.

(QUEEN AND COLOMBO *Exeunt R*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.—ON BOARD SHIP AT SEA.

COLOMBO ALONE FORWARD; MEN AFT CONSULTING.

Col.—The men are ill at ease,
And discontent is ripening into threats.
The pilots, when the compass varied,
Thought the laws of nature were reversed.

(*Consults chart. Sailor heard speaking.*)

Sail.—You're right, my mate, we all
Shall perish soon, if we go on.

Col.—Three thousand miles from Spain,
And we are near where Toscanelli placed

Cipango on his map, a thousand miles
Beyond where any ship has ventured.
Day by day the signs of land have been
Increasing, till to me our near approach
To far Cipango is as certain as
That Palos is in Spain.

(*Pauses. Sailor heard again*)

Sail.—Correct. He's mad, and none
Will blame us if we turn back.

Col.—And yet the threats of these
Poor, frightened men may ripen into
Action ere we reach the object of our quest.
I am alone among these reckless sailors;—
Nay, I'm not alone, (*pointing upwards*) for God
Is here, and He can stay the wrath
Of men and guide the faithful out
Of darkness into light. (*Pause*)

Sail.—That's the thing. Throw him
Overboard and back we go.

Col.—Till now I have sustained
The strongest and restrained the weak
From yielding to their fears. But now I well
Can see that they have reached the limit
Of obedience to my will. (*Pause.*)

Sail.—Tomorrow morning be it.
Pedro, you go talk with him.

Col.—The darkness gathers and with that
I feel assured the leading spirits will
Demand that we return to Spain. They come,
And now the crisis is at hand.

Sail. (Advancing)—Senor Colombo.

Col.—Henriquez Armatero, Admiral
Colombo waits to hear you.

Sail.—I speak for others here, as well
As for myself. We left our homes, our wives,
And children far away in Spain,
Because our queen so ordered. We have sailed
For days and weeks beyond where men
Have ever dared to go. Till now we have
Obeyed your will and when tomorrow dawns
Full seventy days will end since we
Bade home farewell. But every sign of late

Has failed, and we refuse to sacrifice
Our lives to gratify the wild
Ambition of a madman.

Col.—Henriquez, I have borne with patience
Many words and deeds which other men
Would quick have punished. But there is
A limit to endurance. Royal orders sent
You forth, and royal power made me
Your officer. Sign after sign has come
To show that we are nearing land.
Yet you, when triumph is at hand,
Would tamely turn your backs. I speak not now
As plain Colombo, but as vested with
The power of Spain. Be frank and say
What you demand and I as frankly will reply.

Sail.—The sailors one and all demand
That you give orders for immediate
Return to Spain.

Col.—The orders given thus would not
Be mine, but yours.

Sail.—We care not whose they are. Will you
Comply, or not?

Col.—Before tomorrow at this hour
You'll see the land we seek.

Sail.—That song, so often sung, has lost
Its former charm. It does not answer
Our demand.

Col.—My answer, then, is this:—what you
Demand is treason to your queen,
And I will not comply. 'Tis useless now
To murmur or to threaten more.
The voyage shall continue till the work
Demanded by the king and queen of Spain
Is faithfully performed.

Sail.—This is your final answer, then?

Col.—Save this. Return to duty now
At once and even this offence may yet
Be pardoned.

Sail.—Tomorrow, then, at break of day
The vessel's prow will point to distant Spain.

(*Men retire, and Columbus again looks ahead*)

Col.—Ha! What is this I see ahead?

A light! (*Looking steadily*) My eyes are not deceived.
It comes and goes, as if a boat at sea
Were moving up and down upon the waves.
Call Gutierrez here at once. (*Excitement on board*)
Mayhaps, some man is walking 'mong
The trees with lantern in his hand.
Ha! Gutierrez, cans't thou see a distant light?

Gut.--I see it, admiral, and moving to and fro.

Col.--I feared my eyes deceived me. There,
It blazed aloft and--now, 'tis gone.--
Yes, it has disappeared. (*To men*) I saw
A light ahead, and watched it here
With Gutierrez, till it disappeared.

Gut.--It seemed to move, but this
May have been caused by movements
Of our ship upon the waves.

Col.--Good cheer from Heaven. Our prayers
Are heard, for with the morning light
The land of promise will refresh
Our weary eyes. Praise God from whom
All blessings flow. Rest those who can.
For me, I cannot close my eyes tonight.
My hope will be at last fulfilled.

(*Scene closes.*)

SCENE II.—STREET IN CORDOVA.

Enter MANUEL AND BOBADILLA R.

Man--He may return. The unexpected
Always happens, and it happens when
'Tis least expected. Who that saw the madman
But a year ago, or heard the verdict
Of the junta could have dreamed that what
Has happened since would e'er take place?

Bob.--'Tis over half a year since from the port
Of Palos sailed the ships upon
Their crazy venture. Thanks to your
Well planned design, the Pinta sailed
Unfit for sea. Before she reached the Azores
Her rudder broke; but, when we heard the news,
We also heard that mad Colombo had
Repaired the ship and, hurrying out
Of port, escaped the cruisers sent by John

Of Portugal, at hint from you, to capture there
The crafty Genoese. Six months unheard
From! Long ere now the ships have foundered.

Man.—Attribute not to me the careful schemes
Of Martinez. 'Twas he who planned
The Pinta's fitting out; 'twas he who warned
King John of Portugal; 'tis he whose hate
Pursues Colombo Mine is centered on
A higher mark. I leave Colombo's case to you
And Martinez, though if my help prove useful,
You may count it yours, provided you will aid
Me should I ask your service in return.

Bob.—A bargain. Who is he
That has incurred your anger?

Man.—I am not one who peddles round
The street his loves and hates. I keep
My counsel hid within my heart
And, shutting close the gates, conceal my wrongs
And schemes of vengeance. But revenge
Is none less dear that 'tis conceived
In privacy, brought forth in pain
Of cherished wrong, and nursed upon
The milk of secret hate. Yet there are times
When, like an angry ulcer, throbbing,
Growing day by day, at last it bursts
The swelling heart and, oozing forth,
Demands the salve of sympathy,
Lest madness wreck the sufferer's reason.
Thus, good Bobadilla, suffer I tonight.
I hate Garcia, hate him as a tiger hates
A lion,—hate him as did Cassius hate
Triumphant Cæsar. What my reason?
Through my life he stands for ever in my way.
At school he faster ran and higher leaped
Than I; at college he outdid the best I tried;
Upon the battlefield his star shone brighter than
Did mine. And now he beats me in the race
Of love. We both have sought to win
A lady's favor. He has gained her heart,
And I her scorn. Dost wonder that I long,
As Cassius did, to see my rival humbled?
I would kneel and bless the fiend himself
To see Garcia burning in a lake of fire.

Bob.—And I would give ten years
Of life to see Colombo by his side.

Man.—The fire of hate is burning up
My soul, and I do crave for vengeance
With a thirst that tortures every fibre
Of my being. Fate has granted you your wish.
Colombo lies beneath the sea, no more
To vex you. But Garcia lives,
And while he lives I know no peace,
Nor will, until I pay him back in kind
The suffering he has caused me.

Bob.—Could I believe what you have said,
And were Colombo lying 'neath a thousand
Leagues of water, I should be content.

Man.—What hath he done to bring
Such hatred to your heart?

Bob.—In one respect your case and mine
Are not unlike. I loved and, as I thought,
Was loved by her whom I had chosen.
He came here and she—Ah, well,
Don Manuel, I too can hate and, if I live,
I, too, will have revenge should he return.
Meantime, how can I help you?

Man.—A scheme is brewing in my brain,
By which I can get even with my rival,
If I find occasion. It is not
Matured as yet, but when the time shall come
Your help will be of value.—Hark! I hear
The sound of voices.

Enter SIDONIA AND GARCIA L.

Sidon.—Whom have we here? Ha!
Bobadilla and Don Manuel.
The fates are kinder than we hoped.

Garc.—I thank the fates with all my heart,
For Atropos, I think, will find some work
To do before these gentlemen and I
Shall part. Don Manuel, we have accounts
To settle, which are pressing in their nature,
And before the sun shall rise our obligations
Must be cancelled.

Man.—No time more welcome than
The present hour to Manuel. But I had thought
The injuries were mine. Wherein can Don

Garcia claim a wrong received from Manuel?

Garc.—The tables might more fitly be
Reversed. Then would Don Manuel be asked
How, when, or where Garcia injured him.
But this is bootless. You have asked
A question, and my answer is:—the trench
At Malaga and Pablo Estimado
Earning there by treacherous blow
The money paid him by a Spanish nobleman,
To kill a Spanish soldier fighting 'gainst
The Moors. To give this picture greater force,
'Tis said Don Manuel was he who paid
The bribe and that Garcia was the man
Whose murder was thus foully planned.

Man.—Speak on, for here Don Manuel
Declares this speech will be the last
Those hated lips will utter.

Garc.—I would have let this matter pass
Had my poor life been all your dastard heart
Desired. But when to this base deed
A baser still was added,—when you aimed
Envenomed shafts at still a nobler soul
And, ignorant that good Colombo saved
My life, you tried to have the world believe
That he had done the coward deed for which
You paid your tool, 'tis time the world should know
Your utter baseness. Here, in the presence of
These gentlemen, I call you villain, sunk
Below the level of a cutthroat. Draw,
And now defend yourself.

(They fight. Manuel falls pierced through the heart.)

Garc.—So may all base detractors of
The upright perish from the earth.

(Exeunt SIDONIA AND GARCIA L.)

(BOBADILLA carries off MANUEL'S body R.)

SCENE III.—IN FRONT OF CATHEDRAL AT BARCELONA.

KING AND QUEEN SEATED.

MARGARITA, TALAVERA, MARTINEZ, SANTANGEL,
SIDONIA, GARCIA AND OTHERS, DISCOVERED.

King.—Make way for Admiral Colombo.

Bring him to our presence.

(*Enter COLOMBO, FOLLOWED BY INDIANS, ETC. L.*

KING AND QUEEN rise—an unusual honor.)

King—Don Admiral Colombo, Lord Viceroy
Of the Indies, welcome back to Spain.

(*COLOMBO kneels to kiss their hands*)

King—Arise, Don Admiral. The king
And queen of Spain require no further proof
Of thy devotion to their service than
The labors which have proved thy fealty.
Be seated in our presence, while
We listen to the wondrous story which
Thou hast to tell.

Queen—When last we saw thy face
We knew not what might be the fate which then
Awaited thee. A sea unvisited
By European ships lay dark before
Thee. Gloomy terrors hung across the vast
Mysterious ocean. Europe waited in suspense
Whilst thou wert gone. Thy quick return
Has lifted from our royal hearts
A heavy load and given to Spain
A glory which exceeds that gained
By any Christian nation in the past
Or present. Isabella joins her royal
Husband when he says we know
Thy faithful service, and we wait to hear
What wonders thou hast now to tell.

Col.—Your gracious and most potent
Christian majesties, I bow with gratitude
Before the throne of God, the infinite
Creator of the universe and render Him
Most humble and most hearty thanks
For all his goodness. Next, I thank
Your majesties for this great honor
To your loyal servant, who, with grateful
Heart sees now accomplished what
Has been his dream for many years.
My letters sent from Portugal
And Palos have acquainted your
Most gracious majesties with all the chief
Events of this unequalled voyage.
To me is given an honor never till to-day

Acquired by man,—to lay before the feet
Of Spain an empire greater far than all
The kings and queens of Europe, if combined,
Possess,—a territory whose vast boundaries
Imagination cannot grasp.
To you, your Christian majesties of Spain,
I tender this new world, the gift of God
Himself, the King of Kings, whose favor hath
Enabled me to be His instrument
In bringing out of darkness into light
The hidden wonders of the great
Mysterious west. I kneel before you now,
To pay my homage, as the representative
Of those vast territories which you have
Acquired by right of their discovery. (*Kneels.*)

King.—Don Christopher Colombo,
Admiral of the ocean sea, viceroy
And governor of all the islands late
Discovered in the Indies, we now join
With you in thanks to God Almighty, that
He hath preserved you and our other
Faithful subjects in those far-off seas,
And brought you back in safety to
Our presence. Ferdinand of Arragon
Now renders thanks to thee, Don Admiral,
For thy fidelity to this great work
Committed to thy charge, for thine
Unparalleled devotion, faith and courage.
We offer our congratulations on thy safe
Return, and now, as king of Arragon,
We humbly and most gratefully accept
The new dominions which, by God's
Great goodness and thy zealous faith,
We have acquired.

Queen.—And Isabella, queen of fair
Castile, and spouse of royal Ferdinand,
Records in presence of the King of Kings,
Her sense of thy great services to us
And all mankind. And we, the Sovereign
Of Castile, in presence of our subjects here
Assembled, do most reverently ascribe
To God the glory of this great achievement,
Which will stand forever as the most
Illustrious triumph given to any man

Or nation. Fully do we realize
The great responsibility now laid
Upon our throne, to spread the Christian light
Through those benighted lands, and to
This glorious work we consecrate
Our future life. But, Don Colombo, tell
Us now what perils you encountered on the sea,
And how you were received on your
Arrival at the Indies.

Col.—Most high, most noble and most
Christian king and queen of Spain,
When sailing west our voyage was serene;
'Twas when returning that we met with storms
Which threatened our destruction. When we reached
San Salvador the people fled. They thought
Our ships enormous birds, and in their eyes
Our men appeared as gods, and, knowing not
Our purpose, hid themselves at first.
At last they ventured near and, being
Kindly treated, sought to worship us.
Your majesties can see by those whom we
Have brought along, that they are gentle
And well-formed, but of a race entirely
Different from any seen before.

King.—Were fruits abundant there, and were
There products of the soil in plenty?

Col.—On every hand kind nature
Smiled upon the guileless people,
And with lavish hand poured blessings
On their heads. Hispaniola is an Eden.
Fish of many kinds abound, and fruits
Delicious to the taste are seen on every hand.
The boats are called canoes, and these are made
From single trees of size so great that one
Canoe we saw so large it held two hundred men.

King.—And climate,—how is that?

Col.—Surpassed by none in any part of Spain.

King.—Can gold be found where you
Have sailed, good Don Colombo?

Col.—In many places there were traces
Of the precious metals, and one river I
Have named del Oro by reason of the proofs
That, up the stream, much gold could there be found.

I heard that ten days' westward sail
Would bring us to a country where
Such quantities of gold exist that it is used
For roofs of houses.

Queen.—From what you saw, is God,
The true Jehovah, known among the people?

Col.—Your majesty, it grieves me much
To say they know not God. Their gentle hearts
Can easily be reached, and missionaries there
Would find a fruitful field. I am convinced
This is the purpose which the God of Ages had
In view when He directed your most
Gracious majesties to send me thither.

Queen.—The will of God in this is evident,
And we shall strive with all our might
To have it carried out. But Don Colombo
Must be tired, and we shall now excuse
Him from attendance. To-morrow we
Shall hear much more of all those wonders
Which thine eyes have seen.

(*Curtain.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ROOM IN GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, AT SAN DOMINGO. BOBADILLA AT TABLE, CENTRE, GUEVARA IN ATTENDANCE. DISCOVERED.

Bob.—The ships will put to sea
To-morrow with the dawn. Are all the new
Indictments 'gainst Colombo
Ready to be signed?

Guev.—Most noble governor, they all
Are ready for your honored signature.

Bob.—Produce them, then, at once. (*Exit Guev. L.*)
The madman's race is nearly run at last.
No better fortune could have come to me
Than this. The cipher which he wrote contains
Enough to hang him. It shall go to Spain
With other evidences of his guilt,
And Martinez will use them all
To fitting purpose. Little did I think
The night that Manuel was slain,

Or later still, when Ferdinand despatched
The mountebank the second time,
With greater honors than before, that I
So soon would have my full revenge.

(Re enter Guevara with papers. L.)

Guev.—Most noble governor,
The happy people sing your praise
On every hand. But many threats are made
That, if a chance is given, they
Will kill Colombo.

Bob.—He well deserves to suffer at
Their hands the punishment his cruelty
Has earned. But they must let the law
Pursue its course. It were not well that he
Should suffer death while in my hands.
The king might take it ill, and throw
The blame on me. No, this we must prevent.
Send for Villejo, captain of the ship,
And he shall take his prisoner on board to-night.
When thou hast sent the messenger to bring
Villejo here, then go and bring Colombo.
I would speak with him. *(Exit Guevara. L.)*
I'll see how high the mountebank will hold
His head, with iron chains about his neck,
Instead of gold.

*(Begins to sign papers. After pause Guevara enters,
with Colombo in chains. R.)*

Bob.—Guevara, you may go at present.
But be ready when I call, to bring
The prisoner back into his cell. *(Exit Guevara. L.)*
Colombo, how do'st like the ornaments
Which I have placed around thy neck?
Art satisfied?

Col.—A petty soul rejoices in misfortune.
God is just, and will repay thee for degrading
Thus a man who never injured thee.

Bob.—Have never injured me! If I
Could load thee down with chains until
Their weight would bend thee to the earth;—
If I could make thee thirst, like Tantalus,
With water ever near thy lips;—
If I could sear your flesh from head
To foot with iron heated white;—

If I could tear your eyes from out
Their sockets, break each bone in your
Foul body, wrench your heart from out
Your breast, and feed it to the dogs;—
In short, if I could now invent
A punishment so exquisite
That even hell would stand appalled,—
All this would I perform, because I hate thee.

Col. (Amazed)—What have I done to thee
That I should merit this? The fiend himself
Could not be more remorseless.
And yet I know not how I ever injured thee.

Bob.—For years my soul has longed
To crush thee. Once my arm was raised
To strike thee dead;—another time I passed
Thee on the street and would have killed thee;
But ere the blow was struck *she* came
Between us, and my hand was stayed.

Col. (Conjounded)—She! Who was she?

Bob.—The woman whom I loved,
For whom I would have sold my soul,
And who, if you had not appeared, had been
My wife—Beatrix Henriquez.

Col.—Beatrix! Then, I praise the living God
That she escaped a fate which would
Have linked her to a human fiend.
I now do know the reason why
You hate me. But may God have pity on
This wretched island when a thing like thee
Has life or death within its power.
May God have mercy on the people here.

(Knocking at door)

Bob.—Come in. *(Enter GUEVARA L.)*

Guev.—Most noble governor,
The Senor Villejo waits thy pleasure.

Bob.—Go bring him hither. *(Exit GUEVARA L.)*
(To Colombo) The king will have no mercy

On thy filthy carcass. If I dared,
I'd quarter thee before the people whom
Thou hast so deeply injured. *(Villejo has entered with*
Guevara and heard the last sentence.)

Bob. (Seeing Villejo)—Guevara, take

This murdering villain from my presence.

(*Villejo looks at Colombo with profound sympathy.*

*Their eyes meet. Colombo smiles resignedly and
exit R.)*

Bob.—Villejo, I am told the people
Threaten to revenge their sufferings,
By slaying that old tyrant when
The darkness comes. I would not have
This happen while he's on this island,
Although he merits death, with torture, too.
I wish the king to judge his case.
Convey him, then, and all the other prisoners
On board your ship at once.

Vill.—Don Bobadilla, I will do
As you direct. But, if the people threaten,
Guards will be required.

Bob.—I'll order out the troops.
Be sure that this arch-fiend gets
No indulgence on the ship. Perhaps,
Before he reaches Spain the other fiend
Will claim his own. How long before you will
Be ready to receive him?

Vill.—In half an hour. But, Senor Bobadilla,
Here I wish to say you are inflicting
Needless hardships on this old, defenceless man;
And, if I do not miss the mark, the king
Will not indorse the course you take
In sending Admiral Colombo 'cross
The ocean chained, as now he is.

Bob.—I take it that you enter, sir,
Where angels fear to tread. Much more of this,
And you yourself will go to Spain in chains.

Vill.—The angels meant must smell
Of sulphur, for the other kind
Will never visit you. If you dislike my words,
The remedy of gentlemen, if you do know
What such a title means, is at your service.

(*Exit VILLEJO L.*)

SCENE II.—STREET IN GRANADA.

Enter GARCIA AND MARGARITA R.

Garc.—Sweet Margarita mia,

Jacob waited seven years for Rachel;
Then was cheated, and again he waited
Seven years. Am I to be like Jacob?
I will to the queen myself, and on my knees
Will plead with her to let me have my own.

Marg.—Alonzo, if you dare to kneel
To any other woman than myself,
You'll pay a penance heavier far
Than Jacob did for Rachel.

Garc.—What penance could be heavier than that?

Marg.—I'll keep you kneeling at my feet
Until your hair is gray, and then I'll say
You are too old to marry.

Garc.—No penance that. I'd see your face,
And hear your voice. Instead of penance, paradise
Is held before my eyes. I'll dye my hair,
And thus until I die myself I'll gaze
Into the eyes of her I love. I'll to
The queen at once.

Marg.—Small comfort that when I grow old
And wrinkled. But the penance will
Be greater still. I'll tie your tongue,—
A punishment would kill a man in love.
To make it stronger, I will blind your eyes,
For then Alonzo cannot make me blush
When feasting mine with gazing on his face.
But here comes Beppo. He will teach me how
To make you patient. (*Enter BEPPO L*)
Here Beppo, tell me if you ever were in love.

Bep.—In love! Ah, yes; I love Colombo.

Marg.—No, no; good Beppo, that is not
The kind of love I mean. It is the silly kind,
Which some men give to women. (*Looking archly at*
Garcia.)

Were you ever thus in love, good Beppo.

Bep.—Yes, even I was foolish once. I loved a witch.

Marg. (*Starting*)—A witch! Good Beppo, what
Is this you say? A witch! And did the creature
Truly then bewitch you? Will you tell
What looked she like?

Bep.—Fair Donna Margarita, no offence
Is meant; but, if my memory serves me right,

She looked like you.

Marg.—Like me! How dare you say she looked
Like me, if she was but a witch?
Good Beppo, do you think that I
Look like a witch?

Bep.—She looked like you, because,
Like you, she was so beautiful.

Marg.—And yet you say she was a witch.

Bep.—I *know* she was a witch.

Marg.—How do you know, good Beppo?

Bep.—Because I know that she bewitched myself.

Marg.—Well, *how* did she bewitch you, Beppo?

Bep.—As lovely women always do bewitch
The men,—as you bewitch the Don Garcia.

Garc.—I thank you, Beppo, for the truth
You speak. I am bewitched and, what is more,
I love the witch who has bewitched me.
When the spell was laid on you
How did you break it?

Bep.—I wedded fast the witch,
And then the spell was broken quick.
It very often is.

Marg.—Thou art a traitor, Beppo. This is what
The Don Garcia wishes now, and I
Prefer the spell to hold.

Bep.—Some witches are themselves bewitched.
In these the charms they hold grow stronger when
They wed the man bewitched. If both are 'neath
The spell, the charms increase as years roll on.

Garc.—This suits my case in every jot.
I never heard a cure so clearly to my liking.
I am ready now—this very hour, to have
The witch increase her charms by wedding me.

Marg.—'Tis well the witch has royal friends,
For Beppo will not help her.

Bep.—I learned the witch's art and found
A remedy that's always round.
If this the witch will always wear,
Her victim long the spell will bear.

Marg.—Pray name it, Beppo.

Bep.—A wedding ring.

Marg.—False Beppo, I had thought
You were my friend.

Bep.—It is because I am your friend
I wish the spell a happy end.

Garc.—Sweet Margarita mine, the queen
Will find another maid. You have confessed
That she has looked with favor on my suit,
And hence will not oppose our union.
Beppo, here, has pleaded well my cause,
And in his presence I, too, plead
That you at once will name the day.

Marg. (*Blushing*)—I leave it to the queen to say.

Garc.—I am content. Good Beppo, by your aid
I gain my suit. I'm more your debtor now,
For once you dragged me back to life,
And now your spell wins me a wife.

Bep.—Poor Beppo, then, a heavy load must carry,
If he has helped a single man to marry;
The only hope he has to be forgiven
Is, if he chance to meet the two in heaven.

(*Exit BEPPO L.*)

Marg.—How can we prove that Beppo's in the wrong?

Garc.—By living happy as the day is long.

(*Exeunt R.*)

SCENE III.—RECEPTION ROOM IN ROYAL PALACE
AT GRANADA

KING AND QUEEN STANDING BEFORE THEIR THRONES,
COLOMBO KNEELING BEFORE KING.

COURTIERS AND ATTENDANTS. DISCOVERED.

King.—Don Admiral Colombo, welcome back
To Spain. We grieve to hear our royal orders have
Been wantonly infringed, to thy great detriment.
Arise. Thy services have had but poor
Requit, if what we hear be true.

(*Colombo, sobbing, kneels before Queen*)

Queen (*Deeply agitated.*)—Don Admiral Colombo,
Royal tears are seldom shed before the world,
And royal hearts are said to be of adamant;
But royalty is human after all,
And suffering such as yours brings tears
To royal eyes, unlocks the tide of human

Sympathy in Isabella's heart,
And makes the queen of Spain a *woman*.
Don Christopher Colombo, rise and let
Us hear the story of your wrongs.

(Colombo rises and steps down from dais.)

King (Flushing).—What means that chain around
Thy neck, Don Admiral Colombo?
When the tidings came of what had taken place
Our orders were that you should be unmanacled.

Col.—Your gracious majesty, your orders were
Obeyed, and I was freed. But, in my deep
Disgrace and sorrow, I had vowed that I
Would wear this chain into the royal presence,
To remind me of the instability
Of human glory, and to show
Your majesties how inhumanity
Of man to man can break a bruised heart.

Queen.—Remove the chain, Don Admiral,
And hand it to a servant of the household.

Col.—Your pardon, gracious queen;
But I have also vowed before the Lord
That I would keep this chain forever
As an heirloom. *(Removes chain and places it on the
floor beside him.)*

Queen.—A vow is sacred. Yours shall be
Respected. Now proceed, and tell us how
This shameful deed was done.

Col.—Your gracious and most
Powerful majesties, to tell of all
That's happened in the Indies would
Take many hours. 'Twould weary you.
I wrote a full account of all events
Which most concern the public welfare,
Both in fair Hispaniola and the other
Islands. This I leave in your possession,
That a clearer comprehension of the facts
May thus be gathered.

King.—'Tis well. Now state in what condition
Matters were at your departure.

Col.—Your gracious majesties, 'tis right
That you should know at once the dangers which
Have sprung from Bobadilla's course.
Arriving there without conception

Of the needs of such a country he at once
Assumed that everything that I had done
Was wrong. Unfortunately many persons
Of the lowest sort, both criminals
And idle vagabonds, had gone
From every part of Spain, expecting
They could gather gold without exertion.
Disappointed in their hopes, they robbed
The natives, carried off their women and
Committed outrages too vile to name.
The leaders organized and soon defied
Authority on every hand. Most rigorous
Measures were required, and thus to painful acts
Your viceroy then was driven. Hunting down
Their armed bands we caught the leaders, and
Of them made stern examples. Some were hanged
And, when Don Bobadilla reached the scene,
On either side the river hung the body of
A leader in the insurrection which had been
Completely quelled. Accepting this as proof
Of cruelty of mine he did not then, or since,
Investigate the facts as you had ordered him
To do. He read his royal letters patent,
Ordering me to render up the public
Property at once.

King—The royal orders were:—first,
That he should make a fair investigation;—
The second was, if guilt in those who wore
Authority were found, that he should then
Proclaim his royal license to be governor,
And third, if need arose, that he should
Supersede yourself.

Col—Your royal majesties are noted
For your love of justice and your wisdom;
But, with most profound respect
For royal sapience, your servant humbly
Would submit,—you offered great temptation,
When you gave together both the power to make
Investigation and to supersede.

King—We see it now. Proceed, Don Admiral.

Col.—He superseded me at once,
Then filled your royal letters blank, and sent
Them to the rebels, greeting them

With special favor, and inviting them
To come to San Domingo, which at once
Was filled with villains, thieves and cutthroats.
I was absent, but was ordered to appear
Before him and, on doing so, was loaded down
With chains and got no hearing.

King—An outrage too atrocious
To be overlooked. Strict justice shall be done.

Col.—Your gracious majesties, no royal act
Can ever wipe away the shame which I
Have suffered, nor can punishment
Of others e'er atone for what I have
Endured while loaded with these chains.
Indignities befitting criminals
Of vilest stamp, were heaped upon the head
Of him who gave to Spain the greatest
Empire that the world contains.
Your royal majesties, in this I make no boast.
The time was ripe for God's beneficent
Regard for those benighted creatures
In the western seas, to take full shape,
And I was made the instrument
To execute His will. I waited patiently
For many years, to do the work to me assigned.
The great discovery came. Castile
And Arragon have won an empire;—
Colombo—shame, disgrace, dishonor.
Who should bear the blame I know not.
I am weak and am not free from faults.
I may have erred, but in the sight of God,
Who knows the inmost thoughts of human hearts,
I here declare that never knowingly have I
Been false to duty, never had one thought
Disloyal to the highest interests of the king
And queen of Spain. No matter what
May henceforth come to me, while life shall last
I ever shall remember all the kindness which
Your majesties have heaped upon me.

Queen—Don Admiral Colombo, words are weak
When hearts are full. We blush that Spain
Has been the cause of pain unmerited
By such a noble soul. But Spain is not
Ungrateful, and our royal aim shall be
To prove that we esteem what thou hast done

For Spain and for the human race.

(The king and queen here rise from their thrones and descend steps of dais. Colombo kneels and the queen takes his hand.)

Queen--Of this be well assured,—that he,
Who so misrepresented our authority,
And, with the malice of a petty spirit, has
Dishonored thee and thus disgraced the throne
Of Spain, shall be himself divested
Of the power he knows not how to use.
We further pledge our royal word that all
Thy property shall be restored and thou
Thyself be reinstated in thy dignities,
So nobly won. The queen of old Castile
Calls Don Colombo—*friend*.

Col.—Colombo's service and his prayers
"For ever and for ever shall be yours."

CURTAIN.

COSTUMES.

KING:—Crimson Spanish dress, velvet purple robe, trimmed with ermine, crown and jewels, white shoes. (In chess game scene, no robe, nor crown.)

COLOMBO:—First dress;—plain black Spanish dress, with shabby black cloak, hat without feather, black shoes. Second dress,--Scarlet Spanish dress, white cloak trimmed with gold, black hose and scarlet shoes with buckles, hat with feather, sword.

SIDONIA:—Purple Spanish dress, dark green cloak trimmed with gold spangles, purple hose, russet shoes, buckles, hat, sword.

GARCIA:—Golden brown Spanish dress, yellow cloak trimmed with silver spangles, brown hose, buckles, russet shoes, hat, sword.

MANUEL:—Green Spanish dress, gold colored cloak, green hose, scarlet shoes, buckles, hat, sword.

BOBADILLA:—Black Spanish dress, scarlet cloak trimmed with black fur, black hose, buckles, hat, sword.

SANTANGEL:—Blue Spanish dress trimmed with lace, white cloak, trimmed with silver spangles, white shoes, buckles, hat, sword.

GUTIERREZ:—Gray Spanish suit, gray hose, black shoes, buckles, hat.

GUEVARA:—Plain brown Spanish suit, hose, shoes, buckles.

BEPPPO:—Plain brown suit, plain gray cloak, brown hose, cobbler's apron, black shoes, hat.

TALAVERA, MARTINEZ, PEREZ and DEZA:—All dressed as Franciscans.

QUEEN:—First dress:—Handsome light blue brocaded silk house dress, trimmed with lace, jewelry, blue satin slippers.

Second dress:—Salmon brocaded satin dress, with jewelled trimmings, white robe trimmed with ermine and spangles, crown, jewels—slippers to match dress.

MARGARITA:—Pink silk house gown, trimmed with white lace, jewelry, slippers to match dress. Second dress:—Dark green silk walking dress, deep cardinal cloak with spangled trimmings, black lace mantilla for head dress, shoes to match dress.

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COLOMBO,

A Drama in Four Acts,

BY A. E. ROSS,

Descriptive of the Struggles and Triumphs

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